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Joint Task Force on Electoral Assistance



Procurement Aspects of Introducing ICT Solutions in Electoral Processes

The Specific Case of Voter Registration

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

ACE	Administration and Cost of Elections Project
AFIS	automatic fingerprint identification system
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
COBIT	Control Objectives for Information and related Technology
CSO	civil society organisation
DEX	direct execution
DIM	direct implementation
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
DRS	disaster recovery site
EC	European Commission
EMB	election management body
EU	European Union
GPECS	UNDP Global Programme for Electoral Cycle Support
GPU	Global Procurement Unit
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organisation
ICT	information and communications technology
IDEA	International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance
IEEE	International Electrical Electronic Engineers Association
ISO	International Organisation for Standardization
IT	information technology
JTF	EC-UNDP Joint Task Force on Electoral Assistance
LPAC	Local Project Appraisal Committee
LTA	long-term agreement
NEX	national execution
NGO	non-governmental organisation
NIM	national implementation
OCR	optical character recognition
OMR	optical mark reader
PSO	Procurement Support Office
SoW	scopes of work
TCO	total cost of ownership
ToR	terms of reference
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

Notes on text: All figures marked with \$ are US dollar amounts unless specified otherwise.
Also, throughout the operational paper, text boxes are used to identify i) key concepts and ideas; ii) case studies; and iii) further reference. Each of these kinds of text boxes are indicated with the following terminology:



Key concepts and ideas: Important concepts, ideas and advice relating to the different stages of the electoral cycle



Case study: Additional information and lessons learned on specific case studies



Further reference: Additional reference on specific issues

Rationale

This is the first paper in the Operational Paper Series published by the EC-UNDP Joint Task Force on Electoral Assistance (JTF). It was prepared in collaboration with the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) and the ACE Electoral Knowledge Network (ACE). It is therefore also published as part of the ACE “Focus On...” series.¹ This paper is the result of operational lessons and best practices learned since 2004 through the partnership between the European Commission (EC) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The collaboration between the JTF and International IDEA since 2004 has enabled continual support to the ACE Project using materials and tools derived from EC-UNDP projects, UNDP and IDEA guides on electoral assistance/electoral administration, joint EC-UNDP-IDEA trainings and the eLearning Course on Effective Electoral Assistance.

The paper analyses the experiences from electoral assistance projects, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, that included the introduction of information and communication technologies (ICTs) for voter registration processes and the procurement of the related electoral material and services.

The findings relate to a period from late 2004 to the end of 2009. They draw mostly from experiences gathered on joint EC-UNDP formulation missions and the resultant UNDP projects, usually “basket-funded”² with substantial contributions from the EC and European Union (EU) Member States.

1 The ACE Focus On series is part of the ACE Encyclopaedia and provides information on cross-cutting issues of the electoral cycle. The current ACE “Focus On...” collection consists of the following papers: “Electoral Laws: A Macroscopic Perspective”; “Effective Electoral Assistance”; “Elections and Security”; “Cost of Registration and Elections”; “Direct Democracy”; “Elections and Disability”; “E-Voting”; and “HIV/AIDS and Elections”. Online: <http://aceproject.org/ace-en/focus>.

2 “Basket fund” arrangements are those in which donors such as the EC contribute funds towards the implementation of a project to be managed by UNDP using UNDP procurement rules, and in which donor’s individual funds are not ear-marked for any one particular activity. For example, a \$10 million project might be funded by three donors, all contributing \$3 million each, with UNDP also contributing \$1 million of its own funds. UNDP charges donors an additional 7 percent of the total project budget for managing the project, known as general management services (GMS).



One of the concrete outputs of the partnership between the EC and UNDP is the formation of a Joint Task Force (JTF) among EC and UNDP services. With the establishment of the JTF, the EC and UNDP agreed to strengthen the joint monitoring and quality support mechanisms at HQ levels for the improvement of the implementation of the operations on the ground.

The JTF has the aim of increasing the overall efficiency and adherence of the projects to the common EC/UNDP strategic approach. The JTF provides support to identification and implementation of UNDP projects of electoral assistance with EC financial contributions and whenever requested by EC delegations and/or UNDP Country Offices in agreement with the beneficiary EMBs. This has paved the way and facilitated further financial support from the EC and other donors, thus far mainly EU Member States, in a coordinated manner, thus playing an important catalytic role. The lessons learned from various missions by the JTF are consolidated and codified so that they can effectively feed into the implementation of new electoral assistance projects, the EC-UNDP-IDEA Joint Trainings on Effective Electoral Assistance and the ACE Electoral Knowledge Network.

The work of the Joint Task Force is coordinated by the UN/UNDP Brussels office and composed by EC and UNDP staff dealing with electoral assistance at HQ levels in Brussels, New York and Copenhagen and external consultants contracted by UN/UNDP Brussels Office. The mobilization of resources, operational support and training, are the working areas where the Joint Task Force is focusing. For further information visit: <http://www.ec-undp-electoralassistance.org>



On 1 July 2009, UNDP launched a three-year global initiative, the Global Programme for Electoral Cycle Support (GPECS) to help countries improve their electoral laws, processes and institutions and enhance the participation of women in electoral processes. The programme is 99 percent-funded through a generous contribution from the Government of Spain, as well as the support of CIDA. The GPECS seeks to enhance the credibility, transparency, effectiveness and sustainability of electoral institutions and processes, with a particular emphasis on capacity development, south-south exchanges, inclusive participation and women's empowerment.

The GPECS is a programme of the Bureau for Development Policy, which leads the democratic governance practice in UNDP and has the role of corporate liaison with the Electoral Assistance Division (EAD) of the UN's Department of Political Affairs. A number of other offices are also involved in delivering GPECS, including UNDP Regional Centres equipped with electoral and gender expertise, ACE Regional Electoral Resources Centres, the Joint Task Force, and the Bureau for Development Policy at UNDP headquarters in New York, which leads the democratic governance practice in UNDP and liaises closely with EAD.

The paper aims to provide a resource for stakeholders contributing to or benefiting from electoral assistance. While focusing primarily on UNDP rules, it focuses in particular on major aspects associated with the procurement and the application of ICT solutions in voter registration, including election management bodies (EMB); local civil society organisations (CSO) involved in elections; political parties; media actors; EU delegations and headquarters; UNDP Country Offices and headquarters; the wider community of development partners and donors; as well as service providers and vendors.

The issues outlined in this paper will be elaborated further in a handbook on ICTs, Civil/Voter Registration and Data Transmission and an eLearning Course on ICTs in Electoral Processes and Electoral Procurement currently being finalised by the Joint Task Force and IDEA in the context of the ACE activities.³ In addition, these issues are regularly addressed in UNDP electoral assistance projects as part of the work of the EC-UNDP Joint Task Force and the support of the UNDP Global Programme for Electoral Cycle Support (GPECS).

This operational paper was reviewed by participants of the first three-day EC-UNDP-IDEA Joint Thematic Workshop on the Use of Information and Communication Technologies in Electoral Processes that took place at EC Headquarters in Brussels from 30 November to 2 December 2009.⁴ Participants provided inputs and comments to this paper.

The workshop targeted staff members of appointed persons from the EC, UNDP, IDEA, the Canadian International Development

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